727 According to the same informant, some warriors from this village[1] had returned from a war a few days previously, bringing back with them the mummified heads of two of their enemies, necklaces of human teeth, and other trophies.

As it turned out, I did not regret my choice, for I was well received in Necodemos and I encountered there, more vivid [773] than anywhere else, the legend of Mundurucu beginnings which considers this very maloca or village the cradle of the human race.

133 I continued up the Cadereri. Strange river! Every day we had to carry bodily our light boat over sand bars. Here was confirmed an opinion I had already formed, namely, that the Cadereri, as well as the Araguaia, Juruena, Mamoré, and other upper branches of the great southern tributaries of the Amazon, such as the Tocantins, the Tapajoz, the Madeira and others, would dry up completely during the summer months, baring their channels, were it not for the falls of the middle course which serve to dam up the violent flow of the stream. The average gradient on the middle course of these great Amazon tributaries, which descend from the central plateau, is steeper than necessary to maintain a normal flow of water. [76]

133 Finally, on the morning of the sixth day as calculated by [491] the Indian, we came upon a tree thrown across the river in the form of a bridge. On the bank stood a crude hut. There was no one around. We blew a horn to call out the owner of the hut, who was probably out hunting in the nearby woods. As no one appeared, we continued our journey. I left behind some trifling gifts to mark the passage of a friendly person.

I thought it best to behave in this fashion, remembering [649] that Lieutenant Captain Soares Pinto had been attacked and killed by the savages for having destroyed some bridges which they had laid across the river. It is impossible to proceed upriver without destroying the bridges, and it is not always feasible to replace them.

For this reason, whenever I found myself unable to replace one in the same spot -- and on that day we encountered four more bridges -- I left gifts to make up in some degree for the damage I had caused the savages. At the end of the day the river became totally impassable: we could not carry the canoe any further. Happily, at this difficult moment we found another bridge over 000 the river and a hut upon the bank. We blew our horn persistently,

[1] [i.e., Necodemos. - Analyst]

501 edge it to have been learned from their Tupian neighbors, the Apiaca. In early times, this bark canoe was used only to cross large streams when on a war expedition. Small [481 streams were crossed either on fallen logs or by swimming. ● 491] Today, canoes are in greater use, but very few are owned among those Mundurucú of the savannahs.

226 132 An additional factor limiting fishing is that the annual rains cause the rivers to overflow their banks allowing the fish to disperse through the forest in search of fallen berries and fruits. During this season, fishing is very difficult throughout the entire rain forest region, even for those people having canoes. For the Mundurucú, who had to fish from the river banks, it was a sheer impossibility. The Indians of the present village of Cabruá complain that they have no canoes and that to fish during the rainy season would involve wading through the igapó, or flooded forest, impractical due to poisonous and constrictor water snakes, covered roots and logs, and the virtual assurance of failure.

226 Dry season fishing was done by two means. The first of these was to fish from the river bank with bow and arrow. To facilitate this technique, platforms were often built on the limbs of trees overhanging the water. The Mundurucú have great skill in fishing with the bow and arrow, and it [177] is still preferred to the hook and line, which was introduced by the whites and is only used during the rainy season when the fish are scarcer and at a greater depth.